



For Immediate Release
October 22, 2026

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NHHA Presents Awards to Outstanding Health Care Leaders

The New Hampshire Hospital Association (NHHA) is pleased to announce the presentation of three distinguished awards for exemplary health care leaders at the NHHA Annual Meeting awards reception held October 19, 2026.

Senator Jeanne Shahenne was recognized with The James A. Hamilton Founder's Award, NHHA's highest honor. The Founder's Award is reserved for "outstanding service to health care on behalf of the people of New Hampshire," particularly extraordinary achievement or exceptional contribution to human health and well-being extending into the community, state or nation.

The Senator was recognized for spending a career fighting to expand health care coverage, patient protections, lowering prescription drug costs and supporting hospitals and caregivers in the important work they do for the people of New Hampshire. She has been a staunch advocate for hospitals and health care systems, advocating for federal policies affecting Medicare and Medicaid funding, health care workforce issues, access to care, behavioral health and substance use disorder, rural health and federal health care funding.

The recipient of the annual Champion of Care Award was Justin Looser, CEO, Hampstead Hospital. The Champion of Care Award recognizes clinical or non-clinical professional or support team members whose leadership, compassion and dedication make a meaningful difference for patients, their families, colleagues and communities.

Looser has demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to improving the lives of children and families in New Hampshire, while strengthening one of the state's most important resources in behavioral health services. He has advanced initiatives at Hampstead Hospital to improve employee engagement, accountability, patient access and safety; made investments in workforce support and professional development; created stronger care teams and enhanced the quality and consistency of care.

The Outstanding Trustee of the Year Award went to John Parolin of the St. Joseph Hospital Board of Directors.

Parolin began on the board in 2013, and has served as Board Secretary, Vice Chair, Board Chair and now Immediate Past Chair. He has also served on the Ethics and Finance committees and as Chair of the Nominating Committee.

Serving as Board Chair during the COVID-19 pandemic, Parolin helped to guide the hospital through various challenges with humility, wisdom and integrity.

In addition to his role on the Board of Trustees, he has served the Nashua community on the board of Marguerite's Place and as a founding board member of MP Housing.

Lastly, the **Medical Staff Award** was presented to recognize a physician whose leadership, clinical excellence and dedication have made a profound and lasting impact on health care in New Hampshire. This year's recipient was **Dr. Edward Duffy, Medical Director, Executive Vice President, Chief Medical Officer and Trustee, Littleton Regional Healthcare and the award was presented posthumously** to Robert Nutter, President and CEO, Littleton Regional Healthcare, and Duffy's wife, Vespar Duffy.



Among his many accomplishments in advancing rural health care in New Hampshire, Dr. Duffy was instrumental in creating Littleton Regional Healthcare's Interfacility Transfer Program, implementing electronic medical records and expanding care access throughout the region.

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About New Hampshire Hospital Association

Hospitals have been collaborating through the New Hampshire Hospital Association since 1934. The Association's mission is to lead through advocacy, education, and information in support of its member hospitals and health systems as they strive to improve the health of the patients and communities they serve.